

New Hampshire Child Care Advisory Council
January 20, 2006

Present: Tessa McDonnell, GSC/USNH; Margaret Leitch Copeland, DCYF, Child Development Bureau; Jackie Cowell, Early Learning NH; Jeanne Agri, NH Head Start Directors Assoc.; Suzanne Regan, Easter Seals R&R; Lara Quiroga, VNA Child Care & Family Resource Center; Gale Hall, NHCTC; Carol Michael, Sandwich Children's Center/ELNH; Laura Jackson Gaudette, NHDOE Bureau Nutrition Programs & Services; Christina Ericson, VNA Child Care & Family Resource Center; Debra Bourassa, Four Pines Child Care- Family Child Care; Bruce Berkowitz, DHHS/ACF Boston; Joan Izen, PTAN/SERESC; Julie McConnell, NH Community Loan Fund; Barbara Loughran, Franconia Children's Center; Lisa Strout, NHAEYC; Lisa Ranfos, Easter Seals NH; Bob Spiegelman, Business Representative; Helen Schotanus, NHDOE/Office of Accountability; Janine Lesser, DHHS-DFA; Representative Mary Stuart Gile; Joe Perry, DHHS-BBH

Regrets: Ellen Wheatley, DHHS/DCYF Head Start State Collaborator

I. Welcome and Introductions.

Tessa McDonnell welcomed the attending members. The members introduced themselves to the Council.

II. Approval of December Minutes.

Helen Schotanus motioned to accept the December minutes as presented. Jackie Cowell seconded. The membership approved unanimously.

III. Discussion of Quality Rating System Proposal.

- The Quality Rating System has been submitted to Commission Stephen and has been accepted.
- Next step is to start publicizing.
- Jackie Cowell reviewed how and why the Quality Rating System was established.
- The Bureau of Improvement and Integrity will be administering the program and is the process of hiring someone. Tessa will forward contact information to the Council as soon as the person is hired.
- The R&R's are in the process of completing a resource guide for each indicator to include samples.
- The Steering Committee expresses gratitude to all the providers and parents that participated and especially the great representation from the community.

IV. Federal Update.

Tessa McDonnell reported on the status of the budget. Anticipating deep cuts to Medicaid, Child Support, Child Care, Foster Care, Student Loans and TANF. Tessa explained if contacting your legislators to be very direct with your message. Vote no on budget conference bill. Congressman Bass and Bradley can be reached at 1-888-233-1221. Jackie Cowell shared that sixteen Early Childhood Providers went to see Bass and Bradley while attending the NAEYC Conference in Washington.

V. Legislative Update.

- Representative Mary Stuart Gile reported on Child Care bills.

- A bill to amend the definition of Elementary School to include kindergarten in all districts by 2007 has been proposed; Peter Allan is the prime sponsor.
- HB 1214- Chapter Study Committee to establish a committee to identify and assess community-based educational and social/human services programs that serve families with children 8 years and younger. This is an information gathering bill.
- There was a hearing this past Tuesday for the NH Child Care predators act.
- Senate Joint Resolution 7- A proposal to amend “No Child Left Behind” and allow more flexibility as recommended by a NCSL task force.
- On 2/7/06 at 9:00am the Senate Education Committee will hear SB 306 to establish a quality early learning opportunity initiative. This will encourage parents to have their children in higher quality child cares and encourage unlicensed centers to get licensed.
- HB 1608 would give extra money to providers for fuel.
- For more information on any of these bills, go to the State Legislative web site.

Legislative NCSL Forum speakers were Dr. Jack Shonkoff, Steffanie Clothier, and Dr. Marcie Pitt- Catsoughis. Representative Gile has copies of the handouts and an attendance list of the 60 legislators. NCSL is going to see about getting an email version of Jack’s presentation.

VI. TANF Child Care Fee Survey- Janine Lesser.

Janine Lesser presented a summary of the results received from the TANF Child Care Fee Survey. The Council thanked Janine for this information.

VII. Child Development Bureau Update.

Margaret Leitch Copeland reported:

- Maggie Bishop is the Temporary Acting DCYF Director and Nancy Rollins is the Acting Director Office of Medicaid Business and Policy and of the Division of Community Care Services.
- Bill Wheeler is the new TANF Administrator.
- Dawn Rouse will be presenting the new provider handbook at February’s meeting.
- 47% have responded to the Market Rate Survey. The R&R’s are following up. Margaret asked the Council to follow up with their staff to be sure the survey was completed.
- The Infant Toddler Curriculum Day is 1/21/06. There will be 120 infant toddler providers.
- Fraud update: A Child Care provider in Antrim
- Bob Spiegelman discussed the Henry Morgan Award Endowment has received \$16,000. They will need \$50,000 to be able to distribute 20 awards a year. The Council congratulated Bob on his efforts and he expressed his gratitude to Gwen Morgan. Any donations should be sent to NAEYC.

VIII. Introduction to the 5 year planning process.

Tessa McDonnell is meeting individually with the people interested in being on the committee. Kathy Bogle Shields from Providian will support the 5 year plan. A written design will be presented at the next meeting.

VIII. Announcements.

- Christina Ericson shared that Commission Stephen will be visiting VNA on 2/6/06.
- Lisa Strout handed out flyers regarding two upcoming NHAEYC conferences. She shared that the Administration conference is collaborating with Vermont.
- Julie McConnell shared information about upcoming workshops.
- Representative Mary Stuart Gile shared a conversation she had with Maxine Morse regarding how she loved the opportunity to speak to the Council.
- Lisa Ranfos announced that the NH CCR&R now has a website. The address is www.nhccrr.org
- Gale Hall is interviewing for a Lab School Director at NHTI. She also shared that they have now hired 2 former graduates as faculty, Lisa Ranfos and Amy Upton.

IV. Conclusion/Adjournment.

Bob Spiegelman motioned to adjourn. Helen Schotanus seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

Submitted by Jeanne Agri, Secretary

**New Hampshire Child Care Advisory Council
February 17, 2006**

Present: Tessa McDonnell, GSC/USNH; Margaret Leitch Copeland, DCYF, Child Development Bureau; Jackie Cowell, Early Learning NH; Lara Quiroga, VNA Child Care & Family Resource Center; Gale Hall, NHCTC; Carol Michael, Sandwich Children's Center/ELNH; Christina Ericson, VNA Child Care & Family Resource Center; Bruce Berkowitz, DHHS/ACF Boston; Joan Izen, PTAN/SERESC; Lisa Ranfos, Easter Seals NH; Helen Schotanus, NHDOE/Office of Accountability; Janine Lesser, DHHS-DFA; Representative Mary Stuart Gile; Joe Perry, DHHS-BBH; Ellen Wheatley, DHHS/DCYF Head Start State Collaborator; Nancy Pynchon, Easter Seals NH; Brooke Stebbins, DHSS- Maternal & Child Health; Jody Carson, Rockingham Community Action Child Care Services; Glenda West, Easter Seals of NH; Susan Wall, SNHS, Inc. Head Start

Regrets: Jeanne Agri, NH Head Start Directors Assoc.; Debra Bourassa, Four Pines Child Care- Family Child Care; Julie McConnell, NH Community Loan Fund; Rachel Kelly, Child & Family Services of NH, Bob Spiegelman, BIA

Note: This will be the last meeting at this Quest Center. Starting next month we will be in the new QUEST Center. Margaret handed out a map and directions.

I. Welcome and Introductions.

Tessa McDonnell welcomed the attending members. The members introduced themselves to the Council.

II. Approval of January Minutes.

Representative Mary Stuart Gile motioned to accept the January minutes with amendments. Helen Schotanus seconded. The membership approved unanimously.

III. Discussion of Quality Rating System- Sharon Lee

The Steering Committee met with Sharon Lee. She has begun creating forms and determining the process for applying for Licensed Plus. Sharon will also be creating a logo, brochure and announcements that will go to the press. Tentatively on March 14, 2006, Commissioner Stephens will do a press release announcing Licensed Plus. Tessa encouraged the council to go ahead and start working with the centers to gather their paperwork for completing the application. Any centers that received Licensed Plus will be recognized at the celebration on April 4, 2006.

IV. Federal Update.

Tessa McDonnell reported that the Senate and the House have approved reduced spending in all areas discussed last month. Margaret Leitch Copeland reported that the CCDF reauthorization has no policy changes. There has been new money made available for child care but it now will have to be matched. Tessa McDonnell thanked those that made calls to Bass and Bradley. It would be appropriate to send a follow up letter to your Senators and Congress people.

V. Legislative Update.

- Representative Mary Stuart Gile reported:

- SB 306- Received a favorable hearing. Testimony was positive. The problem is money and the source of money. Thursday it goes to the Policy Committee of the full Senate. This bill would allow parents whose income increases above subsidiaries to be able to received money to keep children in child care.
- HB 1608- Work in progress according to Mary Jane Wallner. This bill would give money to child cares for fuel costs.
- Mary Jane Wallner proposed a bill to look at amounts of money to reimburse TANF participants. Bill passed Health and Human Services Committee.
- Kindergarten bill- Representative Balboni said not to include it as part of elementary but to expand the amount of money went through the house.
- HB 1214- Bill in the Children and Family Law Committee. See the handout.
- HB 1127- This bill would require religious leaders to report on Child Abuse.

Helen Schotanus motioned for Tessa McDonnell to write a letter from the Council to support HB 1127 and support of legislation protecting children. Gale Hall seconded. The membership approved unanimously.

VI. Infant Mental Health Teams Update- Joan Izen and Joe Perry.

Joe Perry and Joan Izen updated the Council on the Infant Mental Health Teams. Joan handed out Technical Assistance and Supports for Regional Infant Mental Health Teams. Tessa thanked both Joe and Joan for their work.

VII. TANF Update- Janine Lesser.

Janine Lesser spoke about the copay proposal. She is looking for comment at this point and then will move forward.

VIII. Child Care Provider Billing and Payment Handbook (Draft)- Dawn Rouse.

Dawn Rouse presented on the draft version of the Child Care Provider Billing and Payment Handbook. A copy was mailed to the Council. She is asking for feedback “Is it understandable and readable?” Please contact Dawn directly with your feedback March 3, 2006.

IX. Child Development Bureau Update.

Margaret Leitch Copeland reported:

- Wendy Kessler was unable to attend the meeting. Margaret handed out the Bureau of Child Care Licensing Statistics 01-05 in her absence.
- Handed out the Child Development Bureau February mailing.
- 51% have responded to the Market Rate Survey. Thanks to the R&R’s.
- There are applications on the web for the Infant Toddler Seminar being held on August 6, 2006 at Waterville Valley.
- Thanks for Bob Spiegelman, the Henry Morgan Award has collected \$20,000 so far.
- Planning for the Celebration on April 4, 2006 is coming along.

X. Five Year Child Care Plan.

Tessa McDonnell shared that the process was delayed due to work on the Licensed Plus Project. Tessa handed out an outline which will be sent to Commissioner Stephen. Please call or email Tessa with feedback. 513-1308 or tessa.mcdonnell@granite.edu.

XI. Conclusion/Adjournment.

Helen Schotanus motioned to adjourn. Jackie Cowell seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

Submitted by Jeanne Agri, Secretary

New Hampshire Child Care Advisory Council
March 17, 2006 • Meeting Minutes

Welcome and Introductions

Tessa welcomed everyone to the new QUEST Center.

Attending:

Bob Spiegelman, BCI	Joan Izen, PTAN
Michael Freeman, CCR&R	Lisa J. Strout, NHAEYC
Debra Bourassa, Four Pines CC/Family CC	Carol Michael, Sandwich CC &ELNH
Margaret Leitch Copeland, DCYF CC Bureau	Wendy Kessler, Bureau CC Licensing
Lara Quiroga, VNA CC & Family Resource Center	Rep. Mary Stuart Gile, NH Legislature
Christina Ericson, VNA CC & Family Resource Ctr.	Joe Perry, DHHS –BBH
Rachel Kelly, Child & Family Services	Chris Lister, Nashua CC Services Office
Michelle Dembiec, Maternal & Child Health	Jackie Cowell, ELNH
Julie McConnell, NH Comm. Loan Fund	Tessa McDonnell, GSC/USNH
Suzanne Regan, Easter Seals CCR&R	Sharon Lee, DHHS
Deidre O'Hare, Nashua CCR&R	Bruce Berkowitz, DHHS, ACF Boston

Regrets: Nancy Pynchon

Guests: Alison Morgan – for Jeanne Agri, Head Start

Approval of February Minutes

Tessa discussed that in future documents that QUEST be capitalized as this stands for “Quality Using Education, Support and Training”.

Bob Spiegelman had sent his regrets to the February meeting, but he was noted as absent.

#8 the sentence “ begin understandable and useable” should be amended to “being understandable and readable”.

A motion was made by Carol Michael to accept the February minutes as amended. Mary Stuart Gile seconded. Motion passed as amended.

Discussion of Quality Rating System – Sharon Lee, Licensed Plus

There was good publicity for the Quality Rating System at the Licensed Plus press conference last week. Margaret stated that the system made the USA Today under New Hampshire happenings on March 15 as well as many NH newspapers.

The web page is up and it contains the frequently asked questions. Sharon would like to see an actual parent page as part of this. Let her know if you want any changes or have any suggestions.

At this time there have not been any requests for hard copy of the application. ELNH questioned the ability to decrease the lag between the licensing visit and the final document – thus a lag in the findings and the ability to correct. Let Sharon know if this is a problem and she will follow up.

There was also discussion that sites are not sure if they are certified as some do not have anything in writing. All programs have received a letter stating they are certified if they have completed the process. If a site has a question pertaining to this or for renewals contact Kathy Minaert. If you are interested in becoming certified review the web site "Q & A" section for the process.

Discussion of Pandemic Planning for Child Care

Jane Manning from the Division of Public Health Services presented information pertaining to guidance for child care settings regarding the pandemic influenza. Jane explained that the department is developing procedures/guidelines for child care setting. There will be recommendations for the facility, staff and children.

Recommendations at this time are:

- Regular vaccines
- Regular hand washing - if you don't have access to soap and water then use waterless wash
- Clean toys
- Educate staff and parents by posters and giving handouts on coughing, hygiene, etc.
- Keep parents informed.
- Encourage staff to stay home when ill
- Encourage parents to keep their children home when ill
- Increase air circulation and ventilation

Jane also discussed the Avian flu. At this time there has been no confirmed human to human infection. As of March 13, 2006 there have been 177 confirmed cases with 99 deaths overall. This does not include mild cases. There is no vaccine to date for this flu, however being vaccinated for the regular flu will assist ruling it out as symptoms are similar.

Sites can review the infectious control guidelines in licensing and safety manual. CDC also has some specific guidelines to disease control on their web site.

If staff have questions they can call 271-4496. There is a nurse available 24/7.

After reviewing the power point handout Joe suggested that slides be inserted into the written guidance as it assists in clarifying the issues.

Tessa suggested that the guidance and slides could be put on the CCR&R and Child Care Bureau's web sites.

Bureau of Child Care Licensing Updates

Mary Castelli, Senior Director, Office of Operation and Program Support, DHHS, explained the Governor's new initiative of posting information pertaining to all licensed child care sites on the Web. The Commissioner is interested in having the public know the positives and negatives (including violations) of each licensed site.

This initiative began due to the worker in Nashua who has 2 counts of alleged sexual assault against children. In addition this will give parents the ability to do research on sites on the evening and weekends.

The Governor instructed the department to get the information on the web site in 30 days. The information will be put on the web in phases and is not intended to replicate the R & R's.

To date the violation data base was updated, increased accuracy and is more user friendly.

The web site will contain:

- Name of Center
- Licensing visit dates
- Violations found
- Was there a corrective action plan requested, submitted, accepted or unaccepted?
- Will explain the basic licensing rules (i.e.: staffing patterns)
- Links to laws and rules
- Sites will be set up by zip code
- Due to the fact that issues that are found by a licensing visits can be of a wide range examples will be listed (i.e.: a "sharp object" could be a knife that was left out or a edge of a block that has been removed from the classroom) There will be a link to another web site where parents can request the actual report. The report is due to be sent out within 24 hours of the parent request
- Also included will be a statement that current findings are available on site

Providers can comment and have input on what they want to say in the general summary pertaining to their site.

It was asked if there will be any links or suggestions as to what a parent should be considering/looking at when deciding on a child care program. According to Mary there will be suggested links such as Child Care R & R that the parents can go to.

The following were recommendations by the group to Mary pertaining to the web pages:

- that an explanation be placed on the individual site page describing whether any violations listed were one time incidents or a pattern
- that a list of no-critical findings be placed on the web but specifics to non critical findings not be displayed on the site page
- eliminate the question on page 2 "display only those without a Critical Violation Statement or Findings?" as having a finding does not mean that the Center is not a quality program
- a glossary of terms be posted as well as some definitions can be misinterpreted
- include if a center is working on quality improvement plans
- have a disclaimer at the beginning that a violation does not rule out quality
- That the lag time between a licensing visit and the report of findings take less time – the concern is that parents will read of violations before the site Directors do (this has been brought to the attention of the Commissioner who feels that the report should be posted on the day it is mailed to the Center. No solution has been reached yet.)
- Non founded complaints are also non public. It was questioned whether parents should be made aware that there were complaints made but they were not founded
- that a statement be made that a Center has 21 days to correct a violation

- that a member of the advisory committee work with Mary to bring further recommendations - Lisa volunteered (lisaistroute@gmail.com 225 – 4856)
- Tessa will get a draft of the cover sheet sent out for all to comment on
- Tessa suggested that R&R let centers know that this is going to be happening
- it was also suggested information pertaining to the web site be put in the free parenting newspapers

Federal Update

Margaret reported on the organizational change that will be happening on the federal level that will be affecting Child Care and Head Start.

Bruce reported that due to an emphasis of the OMB report and the Payment Recovery Act of 2002, a voluntary state program assessment has been piloted in Kansas and will be piloted in Maine. Systems in the survey include internal control, integrity and ethic value statements, organization structure, risk assessments and the establishment of agency objectives.

There will be 2 issues looked at: payment recovery and error rate (i.e.: fraud, improper payments). Right now this is all voluntary but Bruce reported that an error rate may be mandatory in the future.

Legislative Updates

Mary reported the following:

- Quality Early Learning and SB306 are the same. Passed the senate.
- HB 1608 – Will be heard on March 22
- HB 1127 – article has been printed
- HB 1214 – will be heard before the Senate
- HB 1131 - recently was amended deleting a lot of state responsibility
- TANF – passed the House
- Kindergarten Finance Bill – passed the House

TANF Update

Janine Lesser was unable to attend the meeting.

Child Development Bureau Update

The contract with Plus Time NH was approved by Governor & Council.

On March 18 there will be a provider appreciation day for license – exempt providers. 55 providers are expected to attend.

There will be reserved seats for Council members at the Celebration of Early Childhood Professionals.

Five Year Child Care Plan

Tessa reported that the committee has met twice. They are negotiating utilizing a facilitator.

Announcements

NAEYC Conference – April 29th

Granite State will be hosting a non-profit Administrator's Course in conjunction with the Head Start State Collaboration Office.

R & R Conference will be May 13th at the Interlakes High School in Meredith

Handouts:

Guidance for Child-Care Settings: Pandemic Influenza Preparedness & Response
Guidance for Child-Care Settings: Pandemic Influenza Preparedness & Response –
Power Point
DHHS Bureau of Child Care Licensing Web Page
Clarity in laws will protect children – article from the Concord Monitor
Letter to Secretary Leavitt
Child Care Financial Management Project – session on Pro Care
Child Care Financial Management Project – Workshop Series
Granite State College EDU 605: Early Childhood and Non-Profit Program
Administration Course
NHAEYC 2006 Spring Conference Brochure
VAEYC/NHAEYC Administrators' Conference Brochure

Motion to adjourn was made by Suzanne Regan. Seconded by Lisa Strout. Meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m...

Respectfully submitted:

Alison Morgan

Approved CCAC April 21, 2006

New Hampshire Child Care Advisory Council
April 21, 2006

Present: Tessa McDonnell, GSC/USNH; Margaret Leitch Copeland, DCYF, Child Development Bureau; Jackie Cowell, Early Learning NH; Lara Quiroga, VNA Child Care & Family Resource Center; Gale Hall, NHCTC; Carol Michael, Sandwich Children's Center/ELNH; Christina Ericson, VNA Child Care & Family Resource Center; Lisa Ranfos, Easter Seals NH; Helen Schotanus, NHDOE/Office of Accountability; Janine Lesser, DHHS-DFA; Representative Mary Stuart Gile; Ellen Wheatley, DHHS/DCYF Head Start State Collaborator; Bobbie Gaudette & Michael Freeman & Suzanne Regan, Easter Seals NH; Brooke Stebbins, DHSS- Maternal & Child Health; Jody Carson, Rockingham Community Action Child Care Services;; Susan Wall, SNHS, Inc. Head Start; Jeanne Agri, NH Head Start Directors Assoc.; Debra Bourassa, Four Pines Child Care- Family Child Care; Lisa Strout, NHAEYC; Gale Hall, NHTI; Wendy Kessler, BCCL; Deirdre O'Hare, CCR&R Nashua; Sharon Kaiser, Special Medical Service; Michelle Dembriec, Bureau of Maternal and Child Health

Regrets: Bob Spiegelman, BIA; Joan Izen, PTAN/SERESC

I. Welcome and Introductions.

Tessa McDonnell welcomed the attending members. The members introduced themselves to the Council.

II. Approval of March Minutes.

Representative Mary Stuart Gile motioned to accept the March minutes with corrections. Suzanne Regan seconded. The membership approved unanimously.

III. CDB Financial Report- Dague Clark and Baerbel Willis

Baerbel Willis and Dague Clark presented the CDB Financial Report via PowerPoint and handout. There were minor changes from last November. The report is data from 7/1/05-12/31/05. A question was asked in regards to Chart 9 and the web billing application. There was money paid out to the computer company and to get the systems upgraded. There is no fee to users of web billing.

IV. Federal Update.

Margaret Leitch Copeland reported that the Child Care Bureau at the Federal Level has moved to the Office of Family Assistance (OFA). There is the possibility of 1.558 million of matching funds. Federal mandatory and federal matching has been reauthorized. Optimistic to be able to come up with a soft match. The money needs to spent or obligated by 10/1/06. What are the implications of the move to OFA? There is an issue of one Associate Commissioner per division. There will be no funding implications. All childcare will be under TANF umbrella. Proposed changes to the regional office.

V. Legislative Update.

- Representative Mary Stuart Gile reported that the Quality Early Learning Initiative, SB 306, has been voted to interim study. The committee will be formed to study the issue. In November, they will then make a recommendation that the bill goes forward for new legislation. Early Learning NH is aggressively working to get people to call their local legislature.
- Jackie Cowell reported regarding the bill to get parents a stipend after Step 3 to allow them to purchase licensed care. She suggested calling the House Finance members to help get it out of interim study.
- Helen Schotanus spoke about the Kindergarten Construction Bill. It has passed the whole Senate and is now being sent to Senate Finance. She suggested calling your Senator to say that you want public kindergarten if you're in a community that doesn't have it.
- The Pumpkin bill passed. The pumpkin is now the fruit of NH.
- HB 1608 had no testimony other than in favor.
- HP 1127 is an interim study.

VI. Follow up re: website posting of licensing violations and discussion re: proposed amendment to HB1672 (registry for substantiated cases of abuse, neglect or exploitation...) Mary Castelli

Mary Castelli spoke to the number of individuals and hours spent working on getting the information up on the website. There has been positive feedback from parents. 941 requests of statement of findings. Those requests were fulfilled that day or by the next business day. There will be forums for Child Care providers. On 6/10/06 in Concord from 9:00am-12:00pm at Eastside Learning Center and on 6/17/06 at Plymouth State from 10:00am-1:00pm.

The Council reviewed the website. Key points of discussion:

- In phase 2, they would like to be able to administer the statement of findings electronically and enable providers to email back their correction action plans.
- Addresses of child cares that requested were removed. The RR&R's called family and family group providers to ask.
- Discussed staff confidentiality about violations related to specific classrooms.
- Is self-reporting tracked and if so, where could it be reflected as to reward the center for self-reporting vs. penalizing.
- Mary asked for feedback of ways to improve the system.
- Criminal record checks in the future, may need to include finger printing as well. Mary is researching the cost and how this would be done.

VII. TANF Update- Janine Lesser.

Janine Lesser handed out, *TANF in a Time of Change*, PowerPoint and reviewed with the Council. Janine spoke about Child Care Solutions: Early Childhood Careers at the NHEP in regards to placement of workers at child cares and what that means. This program will be piloted over the summer with hopes to begin in late summer, early fall.

VIII. Child Development Bureau Update.

Margaret Leitch Copeland reported:

- 71% of the Market Rate surveys have been returned.
- Thanked those on the Council that attended the Celebration. The Celebration in the North Country was held last Saturday and one held last night in Portsmouth.
- VNA and Little Frogs and Polliwogs received licensed plus.

IX. Five Year Child Care Plan update.

Tessa McDonnell shared with the Council on the progress with updating the Five Year Plan. The committee is discussing media related to rolling out the plan. The council will be invited to attend. Also working with the Commissioner on doing something on the website.

XI. Conclusion/Adjournment.

Helen Schotanus motioned to adjourn. Representative Mary Stuart Gile seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

Submitted by Jeanne Agri, Secretary
Approved May 19, 2006 CCAC

**New Hampshire Child Care Advisory Council
May 19, 2006**

Attending:

Tessa McDonnell, GSC/USNH	Margaret Leitch Copeland, DCYF
Wendy Kessler, Bureau of CC Licensing	Joan Izen, PTAN/SERESC
Ellen Wheatley, DCYF	Janine Lesser, DHHS/DFA
Barb Loughran, Franconia Children's Ctr.	Carol Michael, Early Learning NH
Nancy Pynchon, Easter Seals NH	Bobbie Gaudette, Easter Seals NH
Deidre O'Hare, Nashua CCR&R	Robert Spiegelman, Business/Industry
Bruce Berkowitz, DHHS/ACF Boston	Chris Lister, City of Nashua, CC Office
Helen Schotanus, NHDOE	Carol Stiles, BDS/ESS
Mary Giles, State Legislature	
Lara Quiroga, VNA Child Care & Family Resource Center	

Regrets:

Deb Bourassa, Gale Hall, Brooke Stebbins

I. Welcome and Introductions

Tessa called the meeting to order at 9:15 and welcomed all members.

II. Volunteers for Housekeeping

Due to the QUEST Center being flooded, the meeting was held at the Brown Building auditorium.

III. Approval of April Minutes

Representative Mary Stuart Giles motioned to accept the April minutes with name spelling corrections. Nancy Pynchon seconded. Motion approved.

IV. Updates from Janine Lesser

Janine explained that the reauthorization bill has passed the Conference Committee and will return to the Senate for amendments.

Janine reviewed the major changes of the TANF reauthorization including:

- 90% participation of two parent families. This is a concern since NH has a low percentage. NH will now pay the benefits to this population under the Social Services Block Grant which will assist in not paying penalties.
- Orientation will be required, recipients will begin receiving benefits immediately after attending orientation, there will no longer be a waiting period.
- NH will continue to look at the barriers for client participation and additional work placement opportunities (including Child Care Solutions).
- Goal: to develop more than 400 AWEP opportunities by 10/1
- Work plans will be reviewed with federal accountable requirements in mind.
- There will be a 12 month lifetime limit on training and education (currently it is 24 months).

Bill 1301 proposed sanctions. Currently a family has up to 7 months before losing their benefits – this might be reduced to 8 weeks.

- 1st level – if a client doesn't engage (does not show for appointments, etc) then \$70.00 will be taken out of the adult allotment for 1 month
- 2nd level – if the client still doesn't respond the benefit will be reduced by an additional third for 1 month.
- 3rd level – allotment will be reduced by an additional third and Family Strength will meet with the family to determine what the reasons are for their non-compliance.
- Closure of grant.

Representative Giles reported that she feels that the bill will be passed but with opposition.

There is to be a 1.5 million dollar increase for child care under this bill. NH is reviewing the co-pay system at this time. There is a significant gap between child care fees and the state reimbursement. State may pay 90% of the family co-pay through TANF (to the provider). This will be done state wide, not regionally, and there will be a cap.

Child Care Solutions – pilot programs seem to be going well. Some providers are developing a mentor program. DFA will assist with this. The biggest problem at this time is completing background checks prior to placing an AWEF.

Representative Gile questioned as to whether the salaries of an Assistant Child Care Teacher is enough money to assist an AWEF to move out of poverty. Janine stated that the starting pay of the Assistant and the average starting pay in other positions is equivalent.

Margaret thanked Janine for completing the surveys. The information that was gathered has been very helpful in assisting with making positive changes.

V. Updates from Mary Castelli

According to Mary there has been high utilization of the website. General comments have shown that parents and staff are discussing more issues.

Copies of statement of findings are going out immediately after there is a request. As of 5/8/06 there were 1,281 requests and all but 7 have gone out.

There will be two Bureau of Child Care Licensing forums

June 10 9 – 12 East Side Learning Center, Concord

June 17 10 – 1 Plymouth State University, Hyde Hall

It was decided that Saturday was the best day for people to attend. These forums are for providers to make suggestions as to information provided on the web site. Suggestions for the web site made by the Council members:

- Licensing process.

- Constructing positive messages to parents regarding self reporting.
- Issue of confidentiality.
- Rules/interpretation.
- Individual inspections.

ELNH also has a list of suggestions for improvement.

It is anticipated that the Commissioner will attend the forums.

Software Update- research continues on to how to make a statement of findings on the web rather than mailing it to the person who requested it.

HB 1672 – has passed and is waiting for the Governor to sign. The new amendment requires Federal Criminal Record Checks – effective date 7/1/07. A task force will be developed to look at the efficiency and effectiveness of the criminal record checks.

Tessa thanked Mary for the positive collaboration between her office and the Advisory Council.

VI. Licensing Plus Updates

Margaret reported that there were a dozen more applications in progress.

VII. Federal Update

No update at this time from ACF.

Margaret handed out information on SB 2646.

VIII. Legislative Update

Representative Giles reported that:

HB 1608 Passed in the House, but was killed in the Senate.

HB 1127 Child Abuse Reporting – Committee has been identified.

SB 306 – killed in the House but may be attached to another bill.

HB 1241 – Kindergarten Construction passed in the House.

IX. Child Bureau Updates

Margaret reported that there has been a 90% return on the market surveys.

DCYF Conference – awards were given out-

Children's Unlimited, Conway received the award for the Center that best supported foster families

The Professor Award was given to Michael Kalinowski.

X. Five Year Child Care Plan Update

Carolyn Benthien, consultant to the planning process led the Council members in a discussion about the process and upcoming survey. The time line was reviewed.

After the plan is finalized a copy will go out to all participants of the survey if requested.

The September 30th deadline was questioned. This was established due to the annual NHCCAC meeting is in October and the new Legislation beginning in November.

Electronic survey will be going out to the Child Care Community and to parents, businesses and Chambers. If you have any suggestions as to who this survey should be mailed to, please send email address and contact person's name to Tessa. Hard copies can also be mailed out.

The possible 4 questions that would be contained in this survey were discussed. After discussion the proposed questions will be:

1. Define what Child Care means to you.
2. What are the 2- 3 key issues facing Child Care in your area?
3. What are the 2 -3 ways to improve Child Care in your area?
4. What do you see as your role in building a stronger Child Care system in your area?

These suggestions, as well as the decision as to whether these will be "open" questions will be presented to the Steering Committee.

Results will assist in locating new partners in the communities that will assist with meeting the goals designed.

It was suggested than when breaking the data down into regions that the same regions be used as in the market surveys.

The Steering Committee will be meeting on May 23 in Bedford. On July 21st the Council will review the survey results.

Announcements:

The Infant/Toddler Task Force – 30 providers selected to attend the conference.

The Conference on Saturday went well.

Bob Spiegleman motioned the meeting be adjourned. Seconded by Joan Izen. Meeting was adjourned at 11:55.

Respectfully submitted,
Alison Morgan
For Jeanne Agri

Minutes approved NHCCAC - June 16, 2006

New Hampshire Child Care Advisory Council
Friday, June 16, 2006
QUEST Center

Attendees:

Brooke Stebbins, DHHS, MCHS- HCC NH	Bruce Berkowitz, ACF- Region 1
Jeanne Agri, Head Start Directors Association	Bob Spiegleman, Business/Industry
Jackie Cowell, Early Learning NH	Joan Izen, PTAN/SERESC
Tessa McDonnell, GSC/USNH	Suzanne Regan, CCR&R Manchester
Margaret Leitch Copeland, DCYF CDB	Wendy Kessler, BCCL
Denise Corvino, BCCL	Deirdre O'Hare, Nashua Area CCR&R
Katie Mercier, Nashua Area CCR&R	Jody Carson, CCR&R RCAIN Salem
Michael Freeman, Easter Seals CCR&R	Lisa Strout, NHAEYC
Gale Hall, NHCTC System	Helen Schotanus, NH Dept. of Ed.
Janine Lesser, NH DHHS/DFA	Laura Jackson Gaudette, NH-DOE BNPS
Susan Nichols, NHCTC System- ECE Grant	Barb Loughran, Franconia Children's Center
Rachel Kelly, CFS Manchester CC Coordinator representing ELNH Family Provider	
Carol Michael, Sandwich Children's Center & ELNH	
Lara Quiroga, VNA Child Care & Family Resource Center	

Regrets: Chris Lister, Deb Bourassa, Representative Mary Stuart Gile, Julie McConnell, Christina Ericson and Joe Perry

I. Welcome and Introductions

Tessa called the meeting to order at 9:08am. Members introduced themselves.

II. Volunteers for housekeeping

Tessa asked for volunteers for housekeeping duty. Jackie Cowell and Suzanne Regan volunteered.

III. Approval of May Minutes

Carol Michael motioned to accept May minutes with corrections. Lisa Strout seconded. Motion approved.

IV. Revisions of CC Licensing Rules Process- Wendy Kessler

Upcoming Child Care Licensing Forums:

- 6/10/06 East Side Learning Center, Concord 9-12
- 6/17/06 Plymouth State University, 10-1
- Mary Castelli presented on licensing and TANF initiatives at the June 10th forum. Opened the discussion up for questions and answer session. There were family child care providers, R&R staff, Plus Time, and center child care providers in attendance. Discussed how to make improvements and suggestions on the solutions.

Upcoming revisions to re-licensing rules:

- Wendy Kessler discussed the need for input on the licensing rules. The rules need to be updated within the next 2 years (expire in May of 2008) and will need to be presented well in advance. Denise and Wendy have met with the rules coordinator, Michelle Beasley. Brainstormed ideas on the best way to have provider input. Generally easier to respond to proposed changes. Idea to create a questionnaire to go out to all providers. Small task force will be formed to create the first draft based on that information and then present to a larger community. Will need to complete by February.

- What kind of questions to ask? Look at common themes at the forums. Have someone take minutes to help determine themes. Review 5 year planning survey as resource. Education standards- are they where they should be in this current situation? How zoning looks at family childcare vs. licensing looks at family childcare should be explored. Clarify to potential providers that when there is a difference, they must follow city ordinances... Make the rules more reader friendly. What is easy and hard about looking at the rule book? Which ones are you finding challenging to meet? Is there one phrase in the licensing rules that has led to a misunderstanding or interpreted differently by the provider and the licensure? Look at where the violations are occurring to do specific training for the providers and determine what issues are most frequently cited. Which of the rules is the most challenging to meet?
 - Identify everything in the rule that's going to have a fiscal impact on a childcare provider. Fiscal impact from old rule to new rules.
 - Suggested using college students to assist with looking at the rules. R&R's to facilitate some sort of forums for people that may not complete the questionnaire. Different way of completing the survey.
 - Task Force members: R&R's, family child care centers, 1-2 from larger organizations- ELNH, NHAYC, CCAC- group family, center, contracted, school age, preschools- geographic regions, their job get it to their constituencies.
 - Lara Quiroga, Jackie Cowell, Carol Michael, Deb Bourassa volunteered or were nominated to be on the task force. Send additional nominations to Wendy or Denise. Denise will send email to Tessa to send to council for nominations.

V. Legislative Update

Jackie Cowell updated the Council on the following:

- HB 1626 (formerly SB 306) Quality Early Learning Initiative- This bill has passed. Has been extended to 250% from 190% for parents to purchase licensed child care. The Department of Health & Human Services is to determine how much the stipend is and how to administer what is given to parents. Policy doesn't expire after a year, but the money does. This will be effective July 1st. A special thank you to Senator Iris Estabrook on her commitment and hard work in regards to this bill.
- HB 1331- Bill regarding TANF reauthorization changes regarding new sanctions. This is in Governor's Office, he is deciding whether to sign, veto, or allow passage without his signature.
- HB 1672- Mary Castelli reported on this bill last month. Criminal record checks including fingerprinting will be made mandatory as of 7/1/07. Further information to be provided when once the bill is detailed. Childcare provider can pass on the cost to the new applicant. Mary will continue to try to get funding to assist providers with this cost. Criminal Record and fingerprinting must be completed by 1st day of employment. A Task Force is being put together which will include a member from the Council.

VI. Updates from Janine Lesser

- Child Care Solutions has 11 people that have started in the system. The Expo held on June 15, 2006 was successful.

VII. NHCTCS Million Dollar Early Childhood Celebration PowerPoint- Susan Nichols

Celebrating grants success since 1993. Susan Nichols handed out of materials to use as resource for sharing with providers. More than 1 million dollars has been invested in tuition grants since 1993 for working childcare providers through the CTC System. Susan shared a PowerPoint presentation with the Council. Julia

Spiegleman did excellent research for the presentation. For any further information, feel free to contact Susan at 271-6783 or snichols@nhctc.edu

VIII. Child Development Bureau updates

Margaret Leitch Copeland reported:

- Hand out updated list of Licensed Plus from Bureau of Improvement and Integrity.
- NCCIC Consultant- Anne Mitchell will be leaving the post on 6/30/06 to give 100% of her time to being president of NAEYC. Valerie Krajek will be her replacement.
- Thank you Julie Choiniere and Julia Spiegleman for QUEST Center restoration after the flood.
- 5% rate increase- goes into effect as of July 1. Margaret has new rate sheet. Eligibility has gone up slightly.
- Web billing update- Hand out on web billing to show how effective it has been in regards to eliminating errors. Ask Pam Durkee to come in September to do a presentation. Training is available for new providers on the web billing. Call to have your name put on the list 271-4242.

IX. Five Year Child Care Plan update

An Electronic Survey was sent out via email from Tessa McDonnell. There are two weeks left for it to be returned. Please send out another reminder. Percentages of responses have been: 22% parents, 18% Center Directors, 2% Head Start, 7% State employees. Top areas of concern: 1- quality child care- controlling the cost of child care, 2- cost effective, 3- resources- qualified people.

Community Forum: 9/7/06 Inviting agencies, department, organizations that have a vested interest in children. will be held at SERESC. Food will be provided.

Helen Schotanus- Dept of Ed. is moving toward having a test for certification for Early Childhood. Robin Warner needs 17 more people for August 1st for an all day validation for the questions, they will be paid \$120. and they must be certified in NH public schools.

Bob Spiegleman motioned adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Jeanne Agri. Meeting was adjourned at 12:03pm.

Submitted by Jeanne Agri, Secretary

Approved by NHCCAC July 21, 2006